

MINUTES
BBMS PTA Executive Board Meeting
14 January 2009

Present: Jennie Decarrier Benzon, Donna Sudbrook, Kathy Green, Angie Kozlowski, Beth Webster, Laura Zulick, Amy Schroeder, Karin Molcyk, Janet Eagles, Jillian Storms, Gail Miller-Myers, Cindy Garnsey, Samantha Roller, John Sharbaugh, Michele Doyle-Wetzelberger, John E. Davis, Trudy van den Deijssel

1. Welcome: (Jennie)

Minutes of last meeting were approved.

2 Administration Report (Carolyn)

-8th grade: registration package for High School went home. Parent/student night at HHS and LRHS went well.

-First Black Saga Competition (nine students) was held at BBMS. Winning team will go on to compete with other Howard County students in the county's Black Saga competition.

-On Jan 16th our annual final Spelling Bee Competition (30 students) will be held. The winner will go to the county's Spelling Bee Competition on March 13.

-This year's budget not big, however will not interfere with structure in class rooms.

-School Supplies are a big concern in Howard County. Donna also has concerns and gave details as quoted below:

Background on Howard County Dept of Education's changes to school supply/fee lists.

(below is excerpts from PTA Council of Howard County's December 1, 2008 meeting minutes)

Linda Wise, Chief Academic Officer from HCPSS Department of Education presented work-in-progress related to supplies, fees and curriculum related items.

HCPSS has initiated an effort to achieve uniformity and consistency among school supply lists and fees charged for various activities. They are currently working through Elementary school supply list. Proposed a generic school list and is being reviewed by Elementary School Principals. Other items that are being worked on are as below: General classroom supply list, special needs for lab supplies, supplies for photography class, supplies for culinary classes, supplying graphic calculators and loaners, special education needs like ALS program in high schools.

Delegates wanted to know how much money was budgeted to accomplish this task. Ms. Wise replied that funding is uncertain at this time, and will be based on per student basis. Other comments and questions came from meeting attendees. Some delegates raised concerns regarding school-based programs, for example some schools use uniforms and costumes for various events. Where does one draw the line? These things are still being worked out, with a projected completion date of March 2009 to work on some of these items. Ms. Wise will return to the Council during February to give a further update and answer more questions.

Concerns about changes being made to school supply/fee lists from Donna Sudbrook, Bonnie Branch Delegate to PTA Council.

I have concerns with the upcoming changes to how our children are supplied with what they need at school. I feel that the money to be spent by the school system on school supplies for all children, (versus targeted to help children in need) would be better spent on a variety of other items such as bringing all children up to grade level in reading or math, all children passing the HSAs, building maintenance, school construction, greater supervision of children with behavior problems, etc. I feel strongly that HCPSS supplying basic school supplies /fees is not a good use of the school system's valuable resources, both in terms of time and money.

While the intention of these changes may be to help poor children, it is my opinion that these changes only hurt poor children. These changes burden the school system with supplying all students and take money away that should be targeted to poorer children with higher needs.

Are there other options that would satisfy the Montgomery County type of lawsuit and Maryland Attorney General's guidance, but would not require that the school system take such a major role in administering basic school supplies and fees? Options such as

1. Can the schools put a disclaimer on all requests for supplies or nominal fees from home, that the school and/or PTA will supply all children who cannot supply these items?

2. Can the money be targeted so that all children on free and reduced lunch get the option of free school supplies provided by the county, not everyone?

I understand the efforts to ask teachers and administrators to think through what is really needed as far as supplies. In my experience, their requests have been minimal and teachers and administrators are already being judicious in their requests for supplies. I do not want my children's teachers and principals to be constrained by a central source for supplies/fees. I feel my children have a better educational experience when their teachers and principals have the flexibility to request from home what they feel is needed.

-NY field trip for 8th grade has been sold out (more than 200 tickets!). Try to get more tickets. Teacherease will send information about that.

-Wants to know Movie date from PTA.

-January 29th kick off date magazine drive.

-Inauguration date: Jan 20th. President sworn in at 12:00. TV's will be on, so kids will be able to watch.

-Jan 23rd end of second quarter - Report cards Feb. 4th.

-National Assessment of Educational Progress: Nine 8th graders will be picked to be assessed by the state. Parents already received letters. It used to be the staff that did the assessments. Students will be assessed Feb 10.

-Bus concerns: On and off concerns. Increase of student behaviours. There will be monitors in the buses and staff members will be riding the bus. Applies to ES through HS.

-Feb. 6th Poetry night.

-Feb. 13 Honor Roll Assembly and Breakfast of Champions (2nd Quarter)

-Race and Ethnicity ID forms with report cards in order to be filled in.

-Feb. Conferences will start 4:30 instead of 4:00pm

3. Committee Report

PTA Magazine Fundraiser: Beth Webster takes over from Lin and Angie.

Sales will start Jan 29th. There will be a mega party, from the money raised.

Feb. 24 final sales. More details will follow through eschool news and separate newsletters. Have to make sure parents know it is also for renewals.

4. PTA Officer Reports

President (Jennie)

-Will go after Target card. People have to sign up. Jennie has promoting material, needs help to set up.

-8th grade looking forward to end of year: Mrs. Kupisch asked for volunteers for the end of year dance. Donna will forward request for volunteers to Jessica Pearsall. No date for dance yet. There is money for food and supplies. Donations for NYC trip are welcome.

-no date for 8th grade celebration yet. Probably June 10 or 11th, depending on how many snow days we will get.

6th grade representative: On Jan. 23 an outdoor ED letter will be sent home with the 6th grade students.

Chick-fil-a night was big success. Fundraiser shark shirts will come with names on it. There is a proposal for "Medieval Times" fieldtrip, but has to be raised a lot of money for that. One more trip to Chesapeake bay. How are donations divided ? One can give for specific child.

Davis: Likes student the wear same gym uniforms. Uniform is part of your grade.

Treasurer (Kathy)

Still needs money. Hopes magazine drive will help.

Still short on direct donations. There will be extra money from box tops (contest per homeroom).

Vice President (Donna)

-Donna will plan extra restaurant night (March). Are there any fundraisers for Outdoor ED? Donna will ask Debbie Waeger.

-Skating night would be possible, because we got "green light" from insurance companies.

5. Committee Reports

Angie Kozlowski wanted to thank 8th grade teachers for their wonderful job, because 8th graders are very excited to go to HS, great spirit, kids are very motivated. 8th grade signature t-shirts. Donna Sudbrook will check with Mrs. Kupisch. Perhaps after NYC and year book, so somewhere in March, these could be done.

Poetry night (Gail)

Jan 21st first meeting. Encourage kids to go to Mrs. Roberts. There are examples for them. Feb. 5th last practice. Flyers home on Jan 30.

Reflections (Jillian)

Only 5 kids (WOW competition) left to go to the Howard County contest. If there are any winners from our group Jillian will inform principal. In case we have winners they will be honored during the Award Ceremony on Feb 13th. Every student that participated will get a certificate anyhow.

Hospitality (Amy)

Amy Schroeder asked principal for preferable dinner time at Feb. 25 conferences. Carolyn suggested 3:45pm, because the conferences start at 4:30 now. Amy will send out email about what she needs. (Update as per Amy on Feb. 10: Conference dinner has been changed to Wednesday, Feb 26th, same time.)

John Davis: A bowling trip will be done after school on route 40 somewhere in April. Money will be raised for good cause.

Carolyn thanks PALS for great job.

Closing

Next meeting: Feb 11th, 2009

Minutes submitted by Trudy van den Deijssel